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OCT 4 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR POLICY COORDINATION

SUBJECT: Conversations with Albanian Leaders in the United States

The following information, which was obtained during the recent visit of certain Albanian leaders to this country, is intended for Staff Officer personnel only of OPC; in order to protect our source and not jeopardize his future value, it is essential that no inquiries based on the information below be made of any of the persons mentioned without prior clearance with OSO.

A. Midhat Frasheri

1. As regards his sojourn in the United States, Frasheri indicated that he would prefer taking a low cost residence in Washington to living in New York. To this Frasheri received the reply that, in view of his age, the climate in Washington was not too good.
2. During the conversation Frasheri mentioned his desire to have Mdue Marka Gjoni serve on the Committee for Free Albania, and said that his father, Prince Marka Gjoni, had refused. At one point, Frasheri said, "Kupi thinks more of me than he does of Zog." Frasheri also stated that he wished to bring Vassil Andoni and Halil Maci to the United States to participate in Voice of America broadcasts to Albania.
3. Frasheri indicated that he would like to obtain the services of Sin Cja Jakova in connection with the Kosovo question. Frasheri let it be understood that he did not like Sajd Kryeziu because the other Kosovars feel that Sajd is not a proper representative and that Xhafer Deva would be a better one, despite the fact that Deva was a collaborator whereas Sajd fought against the Germans. In any case, Frasheri said that he would prefer Jakova to Sajd Kryeziu on the Committee; he wished Jakova would head a separate Committee working on the Kosovo question, since that constitutes a key plank in the Balli Kombetar platform.

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4. From Frasheri's conversation it appeared that Reuben Markham was with Frasheri on 15 September 1949 from 9:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

B. Abas Kupa

1. On being told of a letter from a certain Miraku in Milan to the effect that Gani Kryeziu had conferred with members of the Committee in Trieste not long ago, Kupa categorically denied that any such meeting had taken place, and swore to that effect on the lives of his sons.
2. Kupa said that he had left Cairo in June, 1949, and indicated that he had been approached by MacLean and Amery and two unidentified Americans, but did not say whether this was in Cairo or elsewhere. When he left Cairo, Kupa was told by ex-King Zog that he should place Nuci Ketta (the son of Keco Ketta) and Ndus Marka Gjoni on the Committee for Free Albania. At that time Zog also instructed Kupa that he should see to it that Zog's leadership was protected.
3. Subsequently, Kupa discussed the matter with Prince Marka Gjoni, who in turn took the matter up with Verlasi. Verlasi said that the B.K.I. would decide whom to place on the Committee and that the B.K.I. should be represented as a party and not as individuals. As a result Marka Gjoni did not agree to having his son on the Committee in a purely individual capacity.
4. Kupa stated that he and Frasheri have a written agreement that they will not engage in partisan politics as long as they are members of the Committee. He said that he had joined the Committee on this condition and that he would take proper action if said condition was not adhered to.
5. Kupa said that he had not wished to come to the United States because he does not speak English but that he had been persuaded to come by Sajd Kryeziu, whom he described as very anti-Zog. Kupa stated that he trusted Sajd because as far back as 1941 Sajd had told him frankly that he was opposed to Zog; his brother, Gani Kryeziu, however, at that time professed to be pro-Zog but later turned out not to be.

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6. Kupa said that he had had no word from Zog for the past three months, and expected that Zog would be somewhat miffed at the way in which the Committee has acted. Kupa said that he intended to explain to Zog that he had been forced to act as he did in order that the Committee might not die aborning. Kupa said that he was a Zogist whether Zog liked him or not and that he didn't go elsewhere because there was no one better to turn to.
7. Kupa stated that he knew that his brother, actively engaged in resistance activities in Albania, is still alive but that he did not know his exact whereabouts, the strength of his forces, etc.
8. Before his departure from New York for Rome, Abas Kupa declared that he was going to organize Zogists among the refugees in Italy, Turkey, Syria, Egypt and so on with the aim of counter-balancing the Balli Kombetar and especially those members of it presently on Malta.
9. Kupa is confident that any attempt on the part of the Balli Kombetar to carry on guerrilla warfare in Albania independently of his support will be fruitless. However, he feared that the American and British authorities would give their entire support to the Balli Kombetar, in which case he felt they would be betting on the wrong horse. He said that the Balli Kombetar would have been eliminated long since had not the United States and Great Britain revived it by their interest and support. Although willing to cooperate for the good of the common cause, Kupa said, he will continue to be faithful to Zog and the Legality Party until Albania is again free. He told Faik Miraku and Vexhi Dobra, Albanian supporters of Zog in New York, that they should attempt to get in touch with other supporters of Zog in the United States and that they should consult with Nuri Kotta, who would represent Kupa in New York during his absence.
10. En route to Italy Kupa desired to stop in Paris to visit a son who is studying there but was refused a French visa by the French Consulate in New York.

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C. Sajd Kryeziu

1. During the course of a conversation Sajd Kryeziu explained that he belongs to the Partija Bujqevore e Keshundare (a rural and peasant party) and holds the title of Secretary General. He added that this party does not believe in having a chairman or head, since it does not wish to entrust too much power to any one person. The party, he said, was formed at a cafe in Rome at a meeting attended by thirty Albanians who were not affiliated with any existing party but among whom were some dissidents of the Balli Kombetar and the HII. This meeting was also attended by Ramiz, the secretary of George Dinklerov, leader of the Bulgarian Peasant Party. Kryeziu explained that the program of this party was to establish harmony between the land-ownere and the peasants through setting up an Agrarian Reform Office. He said that the party enjoyed full British support, but did not elaborate.

2. Sajd stated that his brother, Gani Kryeziu, is presently in Belgrade under the surveillance of Tito's security agents. Sajd produced a letter from his sister-in-law in Jalova which included the information that she had met Sajd's nephew Kemal in Belgrade, that together they had made every attempt to see Gani, that they had not been permitted to see him, and that they had been told that he was well and in good shape. Sajd had learned that his brother is kept in the apartment, near the palace, which once belonged to the family and which was later requisitioned by Security. Sajd said that he had recently received a message from the American Embassy in Belgrade assuring them that his brother was all right. On being asked what Gani would do if the Soviet Union liquidated Tito, Sajd replied, that, in that event, Gani would probably strike out with his forces and make his way to Greece; however, he gave no other indication that Gani had some kind of organization, that he was not a real prisoner of Tito and that the reports of his organizing troops on the Albanian-Yugoslav boundary not be completely unfounded.

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3. With regard to the Committee for Free Albania, Sajd Kryeziu expressed the view that Frasheri, because of his age, no longer has the capacity or commands the authority to run it and that he has become a tool of Zef Pali, whom Kryeziu described as Abas Ermeni's man.
4. Concerning the Balli Kombetar, Kryeziu felt that it had disintegrated into factions and was assuming the form of political cliques, its members believing that the death or complete retirement of Frasheri is imminent. In Kryeziu's opinion Ermeni is attempting to win the leadership of the party; he said that Ermeni is a very ambitious man and that his ideas are no better than those of Mehmet Shetu in Tirana. As regards Hassan Dosti, Kryeziu opined that he was too academic and not sufficiently practical to assume any leadership; although he considered Dosti honest and democratic in his ideas, he felt that he did not have any political sense and that he would not be able to head the Balli Kombetar if and when Frasheri retires.
5. Sajd Kryeziu said that Ismail Verioci was losing his supporters and that now he has only Prince Marka Gjoni and Ernest Keliqi with him.
6. According to Kryeziu, ex-King Zog is also losing ground as time goes on. He said that Zog is operating in the international black market in collaboration with a former Nazi named Sterker, now said to be in Egypt, with whom Zog had made a considerable amount of money since the war. Kryeziu also said that Omar Fortuzzi, an Albanian resident in Rome, and Zog's sister Senije, the wife of the Turkish Prince Avia, have also been mentioned as being involved in these operations.
7. Sajd Kryeziu, whom source describes as being unquestionably a British tool, mentioned that he, and not Toptani, had brought the Committee together; this was subsequently confirmed by Abas Kupa. Both Kryeziu and Kupa gave source the clear impression that they considered the Committee and its activities to be a British show. Kryeziu also indicated that the United States appeared to have given the British a free hand in Albania.

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D. Musi Kotta

1. Source states that Musi Kotta is very careful and does not wish to admit openly that he is a Zogist; he tries not to commit himself too much, usually remains silent, and is tactful in his dealings, but in the presence of Abas Rupi he seems to agree with him. When Faik Miraku, who recently joined the Zogist Party, asked Kotta if he was a Zogist, Kotta answered in the affirmative and said that he would remain loyal to Zog until Albania is freed.
2. Kotta's relations with Midhat Frasheri are not clear. Frasheri never liked Koco Kotta, Musi's father, who was Premier and President of the Parliament for more than fifteen years under King Zog. Although well aware of the antipathy which Frasheri felt for his father, Kotta thus far has concealed it and has never been heard to make any reference to it.
3. Kotta intends to visit the Albanian colony in Detroit, which includes about forty-five Zogists as well as American-born Albanians. He was especially instructed by Abas Rupi to call on a Moslem priest named Khabija, who was brought to this country by American-born Moslem Albanians in Detroit to perform religious ceremonies for the colony there which, in contrast to the Albanian colony in Boston, is strongly opposed to the present Communist regime in Albania. Kotta plans to stay in this country for at least another month, and hopes that it will be longer.
4. On at least one occasion Kotta mentioned that sixty Albanians, all members of the Balli Kombetar, are now being trained on Malta.

NOTE: In this connection source states that Faik Miraku, now residing in New York, about the middle of June 1949 received a letter from his brother, Shafki Miraku, who is now a resident of Milan. This letter included, ~~inter alia~~, the information that the writer had learned from Albanians in Milan that Cani Dilo had been sent to Malta with thirty Albanians of the Balli Kombetar to receive military training from the British; Dilo was to be in command of the said Albanians. The letter also reported rumors in Milan that the Italians were going to train about three hundred Albanians somewhere in southern Italy.

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The writer commented that such news gave rise to hopes that the Allies were anticipating changes in Albania. Source states further that the report concerning the thirty Ballists on Malta had been confirmed by Hassan Dosti, who said that he had received the same information from Gani Dilo himself. It appeared that correspondence between Gani Dilo and Hassan Dosti was transmitted through Dr. Vassil Dilo, a brother of Gani who lives in Turin; source received the impression that Dosti was not to correspond with Gani Dilo until he received instructions to do so from his brother, Dr. Vassil Dilo, but that in the meantime Dosti would be kept posted.

E. Hassan Dosti

1. In the latter part of August 1949 Reuben Markham urged Dosti to become a member of the Committee for Free Albania, an invitation which Dosti had previously refused in a letter to Frasheri. Dosti is reported to have told Markham that he would like to consider the matter inasmuch as he has seven sons whose lives might be endangered as a result of such action. On allegedly being told by Markham that the American Government desired Dosti to be a member of the Committee, he expressed his willingness to accept. Later (about mid-September), however, Markham is said to have told Dosti in effect that the Committee appreciated his apprehension for the safety of his family and agreed that he should not become a member of the Committee. Source believes that the real reason for this reply may be found in the fact that Frasheri is working with Abas Ermeni and Zef Pali, who did not want Dosti on the Committee because he wishes an understanding with Zog.
2. In New York, when Midhat Frasheri met Dosti, who is next in importance in the Balli Kombetar, there was a real quarrel between them in the presence of Zef Pali. Dosti is reported to have told Frasheri that, since he (Dosti) was not consulted or kept informed when the Committee was being organized, he will wait and see what turn Albanian developments will take, despite the fact that he controls a majority of votes in the party and can at any time take a decision even to the point of being able to disown Frasheri as the leader of the party.

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3. There also was friction between Frasheri and Dosti when the former remarked that Dosti should not be in contact with the Greek Counsellor of Embassy in Washington and other persons concerned with Albanian affairs; at this Dosti exploded and told Frasheri that his past position in Albania and his strong following in the Balli Kombetar entitled him to act and speak on behalf of Albania and that he would continue to do so whenever he deemed it necessary.
4. According to Dosti, Zef Pali mentioned that 6 or 7 months ago four Albanians in the refugee camp of Santa Fara in southern Italy were approached by a former Colonel in Italian Military Intelligence, now in the fruit business, and asked to join an organization training Albanians to serve as liaison between Albania and the outside. The last names of three of the Albanians were Lopenica, Cako (from southern Albania), and Llokman (from northern Albania and probably from the Kosovo region.) Although it would seem that these Albanians are now operating in the Kurvesh area in southern Albania, Dosti doubts the story; on the other hand the four of them have been missing from camp for many months. The former Italian Colonel had implied that he was recruiting them in the name of the Allies. The Colonel in question is the same man who had recruited Musa Krenja with two other Greek Albanians.
5. Dosti had said that he is greatly disturbed over the Committee for Free Albania insofar as the Balli Kombetar is concerned. He believes that the policy of the party is being decided by Abas Ermeni and his obedient follower Zef Pali, who have a strong hold on Midhat Frasheri and direct him as they choose. At present Dosti is in a dilemma and does not know whether he should follow the wishes of those party members who side with him and who want to make an official split in the party by circulating a statement disowning Frasheri as its leader or whether he should ask his friends to continue to be patient and, in the meantime, try to use his influence with the Americans to put Ali Klissura, who is hated by Frasheri, Ermeni and Halil Maci because of his popularity in southern Albania, on the Consulting Committee (sic). However, Dosti feels that any political move on his part against Frasheri at this early stage

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in the existence of the Committee might be a mistake. Further, Dosti reasons that he and his friends would not have enough basis to attack Frasheri on national grounds because the Committee is, to a certain degree, representative of all the Albanians in exile. In addition, inasmuch as the Committee enjoys the blessing of the American Government, Dosti thinks that any attempt by himself or his colleagues to sabotage Frasheri or the work of the Committee might have unpleasant consequences for him and his friends.

6. According to Dosti the main split among Balli Kombetar leaders puts Midhat Frasheri, Abas Ermeni, Vassil Andoni, Halil Maci and Zef Pali on one side and Hassan Dosti, Ali Klissura, Nureddin Vlora, Halil Miniku, Dr. Vassil and Faik Quku on the other. Dosti claims that he has a sweeping majority in the party proper. Dosti said that he was going to ask Frasheri to show him the three agreements which he understood had been signed by the parties represented in the Committee.

F. Zef Pali

1. Pali, who (according to source) is not well regarded by other members of the Balli Kombetar, who accuse him of being something of an opportunist, expressed the view that the composition of the Committee was a happy choice and said that he was glad that the B.K.I. was not represented in it. He produced a letter which he had received from a friend in Rome and which stated that Verlaci and his supporters were carrying on propaganda unfavorable to the Committee and were attempting to bring the Albanian refugees in Italy to send a cable of protest to Washington, denouncing the present Committee as not being a representative group; a similar cable was being planned for dispatch to London. In the course of his conversation Pali did not mention Frasheri but emphasized the popularity of Abas Ermeni among the Albanian intelligentsia, and his qualities for leadership in the future.
2. Pali spoke openly about the sixty Albanians being trained on Malta by the British and said that Abas Ermeni was on his way to Malta to take command of them. He also mentioned that the Italian Government is applying pressure among the

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Albanian refugees in Italy to join "a preparatory military organization" similar to that in Malta, but is meeting with little success. He also said that some four hundred Albanian refugees who had arrived in Italy from Greece some months ago are now being asked by the Italian Government to return to Greece or to go to other countries.

G. General

1. While in New York the members of the Committee presented themselves to the Albanians there as a united group working together for a common cause parallel to that of other similar national groups composed of Bulgarians, Hungarians and Rumanians. However, the real relationship among them is one of diffidence; thus far no serious problems have arisen to put their spirit of cooperation and sincerity to a real test.
2. Kupi, Kotta, Kryeziu and Pali all stated that they had been promised by American officials that they would have an Albanian language broadcast and a weekly publication in Albanian. This broadcast was not to be transmitted over the Voice of America but by a private network, probably the NBC. Abas Kupi and Nuci Kotta anticipated a clash when the time came to choose the personnel for the paper and the broadcast; they thought that the Balli Kombetar would try to put their own people in these posts, and Abas Kupi feared that the American and British authorities would give preference to members of the Balli Kombetar, which he felt had already been favored when sixty members of that group had been recruited to receive training on Malta.
3. Midhat Frasheri did not receive a warm welcome from members of his own party and from other groups of Albanians whom he had hoped to win over to his side. In addition to the dispute between him and Hassan Dosti reported above, there was another incident which would seem to indicate a certain lack of prestige on the part of Frasheri. This developed when, after Faik Quku had asked Frasheri if he would like to meet an Albanian Committee from New York, the group sent a message to Frasheri later in the day that they would be unable to come. Quku himself has stated that he is no longer a member of the Balli Kombetar and that he is trying to form a new party with American Albanians.

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4. Frasherj had made himself unpopular because of his reluctance to consult and cooperate with other members of his party on matters of national importance. Ballists accuse him of making all decisions on his own initiative and of not keeping his colleagues informed. Accordingly, they assert that he has shown poor leadership which has caused the split within the party and they accuse him of having become the tool of Abas Khami, who, they say, is gradually preparing to take complete control of the Balli Kombetar.
5. The members of the Committee were disappointed that it had been arranged for them to leave Washington so suddenly and feared that they would be forced to leave New York in similar haste. While in New York, Sajd Kryeziu attempted to get in touch with Dr. Dimitrov but was unable to do so because of his absence from the country.

Assistant Director
Special Operations

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